

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-09 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 RSR-01 /101 W

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R 092300 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1226

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 1618

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: PERONIST LABOR LEADERS SEE FIRST ROUND VICTORY

REF: BA-1487 AND BA-1617

1. SUMMARY: MOST PERONIST LABOR LEADERS ARE PREDICTING FIRST ROUND WIN FOR THE FRENTE JUSTICIALISTA NEXT SUNDAY. LIGHT- POWER WORKER UNION SURVEY GIVES CAMPORA 52.1 PERCENT OF VOTE. UNIONS HAVE CONTRIBUTED LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TO FREJULI CAMPAIGN DESPITE LAWS PROHIBITING USE OF UNION FUNDS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. END SUMMARY.

2. LIGHT- POWER UNION HAS PUBLISHED SURVEY WHICH SHOWS FIRST ROUND FREJULI VICTORY. SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED BY SELECTED UNION STAFFERS WHO CANVASSED CROSS SECTION OF 2,000 VOTERS IN ROSARIO, CORDOBA, MENDOZA, AND BUENOS AIRES WITH FOLLOWING RESULTS: CAMPORA 52.1 PERCENT; BALBIN 23.2; MANRIQUE 7.9; AND ALENDE 7.3. LIGHT- POWER SURVEY CONFIRMS ESTIMATES MAJORITY OF LABOR LEADERS WHO PREDICT FIRST ROUND VICTORY FOR CAMPORA WITH 52 PERCENT. LABOR LEADERS NOT SHARING FIRST ROUND VICTORY PRE-DICTIONS GAVE CAMPORA 45 PERCENT ON FIRST, WITH SECOND ROUND WIN.

3. LABOR LEADER OPTIMISM IS BASED ON FIRM BELIEF THAT ARGENTINA' S
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PREDOMINATELY PERONIST WORKING CLASS WILL BOTE OVERWHELMINGLY FOR CAMPORA OUT OF LOYALTY TO PERON. THEY CLAIM MINIMUM OF THREE MILLION WORKERS PLUS THEIR FAMILIES WILL GUARANTEE CAMPORA FIVE MILLION VOTES AND THAT HE WILL PICK UP LARGE PORTION OF THREE AND HALF MILLION NEW VOTERS.

4. COUNTERBALANCING THEIR OPTIMISM IS WIDESPREAD FEELING AMONG LABOR LEADERS THAT ONCE VOTES ARE CAST AND MILITARY SENSES PERONIST VICTORY AT POLLS THEY, THE MILITARY, WILL EITHER STEAL ELECTIONS BY IMPOUNDING BALLOT BOXES OR REFUSE TO LET CAMPORA ASSUME POWER. IN EITHER CASE LABOR LEADERS FEEL VIOLENCE WOULD ENSUE WITH WORKERS JOINING STUDENTS IN STREETS.

5. WHILE ORGANIZED LABOR IN DEFERENCE TO GOA WARNINGS HAS THROUGHOUT CAMPAIGN REFRAINED FROM MOBILIZING OR ORGANIZING RALLIES, RELIABLE EMBASSY LABOR SOURCES INDICATE THAT UNIONS HAVE TO LARGE DEGREE UNDERWRITTEN FREJULI CAMPAIGN. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, WELL HEELED METALURGICAL, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND LIGHT AND POWER UNIONS HAVE BEEN PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTORS.

6. COMMENT: LIGHT AND POWER POLL OBVIOUSLY BIASED DESPITE ATTEMPT AT IMPARTIALITY. NEVERTHELESS POLL DOES SUPPORT PRE-DICTIONS OF ALL LABOR LEADERS WHICH HAVE CAMPORA AS NEW PRESIDENT ON FIRST OR SECOND BALLOT. UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES PRE-DICTIONS BY AN INTEREST GROUP COULD BE EASILY DISMISSED. COMING FROM PERONIST LABOR LEADERS, HOWEVER, ALL OF THEM ADEPT AT GAUGING MOOD OF RANK AND FILE WORKERS AND MOST OF THEM UN-ENTHUSIASTIC OVER CAMPORA, FIRST ROUND VICTORY PREDICTIONS, DESPITE ODDS AGAINST SUCH A DEVELOPMENT, COMMAND ATTENTION. NEVERTHELESS, EMBASSY STANDS BY ESTIMATES CONTAINED REFTELS. LODGE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUENOS01618
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730323/aaaahxj.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 BUENOS AIRES 1487, 73 BUENOS AIRES 1617
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Jan-2002 by willialc>; APPROVED <04-Feb-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971113
Subject: PERONIST LABOR LEADERS SEE FIRST ROUND VICTORY
TAGS: PINT, AR
To: ARA
SECSTATE WASHDC
USCINCSO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005